

# Two Presidents of the United States Write Commander Newberry

From Theodore Roosevelt

Oyster Bay, Long Island, October 19, 1918.

Commander Truman H. Newberry, New York City.

My dear Commander:

I congratulate you on your nomination, but far more do I congratulate Michigan and all our people. It was my good fortune to have you serve under me as Secretary of the Navy, and I can testify personally to your efficiency and your disinterested and single-minded zeal for the public service. To a very peculiar degree you have stood for that kind of government which puts the interest of the people as a whole first and foremost, and treats all other considerations as negligible, when the public weal is involved. The record made by you and your two sons in this war is typical of your whole attitude as a public servant. Both your boys at once entered the Navy, and are now on the high seas. You sought employment abroad; when that was refused you, you accepted any position that was offered in which you could render public service.

The nomination of Mr. Ford makes the issue sharp and clean. It is not primarily an issue between the Republican party and the Democratic party, for Mr. Ford does not seem to have any firm political convictions, and was content to take the nomination on any ticket without regard to what the general principles of the men supporting that ticket were; and his memory about past politics is so hazy that although he has mentioned a Republican candidate for president for whom he thinks he once voted, it does not appear that this is possible, unless he is in error as to his own age.

The issue is infinitely more important than any merely political issue. It is the issue of straight Americanism, of straight patriotism, and of preparedness for the tasks of peace and war, as against a particularly foolish and obnoxious type of pacifism, preached in peace and practiced in war. This is the first time in the history of our country in which a candidate for high office has been nominated who has spent enormous sums of money in demoralizing the people of the United States on a matter of vital interest to their honor and welfare. The expenditures on behalf of pacifism by Mr. Ford in connection with the Peace Ship, and in connection with his great advertising campaign in favor of the

McLemore resolution and of the pacifist and pro-German attitude against our participation in the war, was as thoroughly demoralizing to the conscience of the American people as anything that has ever taken place. The failure of Mr. Ford's son to go into the army at this time, and the approval by the father of the son's refusal, represent exactly what might be expected from the moral disintegration inevitably produced by such pacifist propaganda. Mr. Ford's son is the son of a man of enormous wealth. If he went to war he would leave his wife and child immeasurably distant from all chance of even the slightest financial strain or trouble, and his absence would not in the smallest degree affect the efficiency of the business with which he is connected. But the son stays at home, protesting and appealing when he is drafted, and now escaping service. Your two sons have eagerly gone to the front. They stand ready to pay with their lives for the honor and the interest of the American people, and while they thus serve America with fine indifference to all personal cost, the son of wealthy Mr. Ford sits at home in ignoble safety, and his father defends and advises such conduct. It would be a grave misfortune to the country to have Mr. Ford in the Senate when any question of continuing the war or discussing terms of peace may arise, and it would be an equally grave misfortune to have him in any way deal with the problems of reconstruction in this country.

Michigan is facing the test, clear-cut and without shadow of a chance for misunderstanding, between patriotism and Americanism on one side, and on the other pacifism, and that foolish sham-cosmopolitanism which thinks it clever to deride the American flag, and to proclaim that it would as soon be a Hindoo or Chinaman as an American. If there should be at any time in the future a Hindoo Senate, and it should choose, in a spirit of cosmopolitanism, to admit outsiders, there is no reason why Mr. Ford should not aspire to membership therein; but he would be signally out of place in the American Senate so long as that body is dominated by men who zealously believe in the American ideal and faithfully endeavor to serve the American people.

Wishing you all success, I am

Very faithfully yours,

*Theodore Roosevelt*

From William H. Taft

931 Southern Building,  
Washington, D. C.,  
October 19, 1918.

My dear Commander Newberry:

I write to congratulate you on being the Republican candidate for Senator in the State of Michigan. I sincerely hope that you will be elected, and I am very certain that if you are, you will render to the State and to the country a valuable service in your high office. I feel that I can say this from personal observation of the way in which you discharged your official duties both while you were Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and while you were in the same Cabinet with me under President Roosevelt. It is of the highest importance that in the settlement of the important questions growing out of this war, we should have men in the senate of your experience in governmental matters, and of your political views. The Democratic majority in Congress has not been one upon which the President or the country could depend for the adoption of measures adequate to the winning of the war. The people of the United States can be much more confident, if we have a Republican majority in both Houses, that the legislative branch of the Government will wisely cooperate with the Executive Administration, and by constructive criticism make that Administration more effective than if Democratic majorities in both Houses are retained. With Mr. Ford's known pacifist views, carried to

an extreme, indeed, with his nondescript political affiliations, and with his engaging in this canvass simply at the instance of the President, the people of Michigan are placed in a dilemma in respect to how he will represent them. He will either go into the Democratic caucus and follow implicitly the wish of the President, who induced him to run, or no one can know what he will do, not even Mr. Ford, in contingencies that are likely to arise. If you are elected, the people of Michigan will know that you will act with the loyal Republicans and that you will back the President to the utmost when he is seeking Congressional assistance for the winning of the war, and that you will be independent and courageous in pointing out the mistakes of administration, with a view to their remedy. I earnestly hope that the electors of Michigan will choose you.

Sincerely yours,

*William H. Taft*

Hon. Truman H. Newberry,  
New York, N. Y.

On your ballot make a cross (X) in the Circle "O" under the Picture of Abraham Lincoln.  
Nothing further need be done.

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